Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union

BCTGM News

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Number 4

OUR UNION
OUR FUTURE
OUR FIGHT

SPECIAL POST-CONVENTION ISSUE

PRESIDENT ANTHONY SHELTON

Addresses Delegates to the 41st Constitutional Convention

BCTGM International President Anthony Shelton delivered numerous speeches and remarks that brought laughter, cheers and thunderous applause throughout the BCTGM's 41st Constitutional Convention. Here are some excerpts:

"Over the last four years, despite some of the limitations on bargaining during the pandemic, our local unions negotiated a remarkable number of new contracts. Believe it or not, our local unions are signatories to more than one thousand collective bargaining agreements. That means that each and every day we have local unions negotiating new contracts. And each and every day we have Vice Presidents and International staff that are assisting with those negotiations, or are preparing for upcoming bargaining sessions. Let me tell you that every single set of negotiations is important to us."

— On negotiating new collective bargaining agreements

"Throughout each of our battles, we got great support from politicians; from the White House all the way to local officials. Whether it was President Biden issuing a formal, and historic, public statement of support for striking Kellogg workers, to the mayor of Buffalo intervening with hometown Rich Products, to Labor Secretary Marty Walsh walking the strike line in Lancaster, political support was exceptional."

— On the political support during the 2021 strikes

"Even when the scientists were not sure what the pandemic was really about or how people caught and spread the virus, our members kept on working. Many got sick. Tragically, some died. But this Union never stopped fighting for them. And in that uncertain environment, our members continued to work to provide North American families with the products they needed."

— In thanking BCTGM Members for their hard work and bravery during the COVID-19 pandemic

"SOLIDARITY occurs when our members understand they are fighting for something bigger than their own wage increases or pension. They are fighting for all their BCTGM brothers and sisters. They are fighting for all working people who deserve dignity and respect on the job."

— On BCTGM solidarity

BCTGM News

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Paul LaBuda • Earl Lublow • Letitia Malone • Keith Morris, Sr.
Gary Oskoian • Cameron Taylor • Doyle Townson
Jeff Webb • Donald Woods

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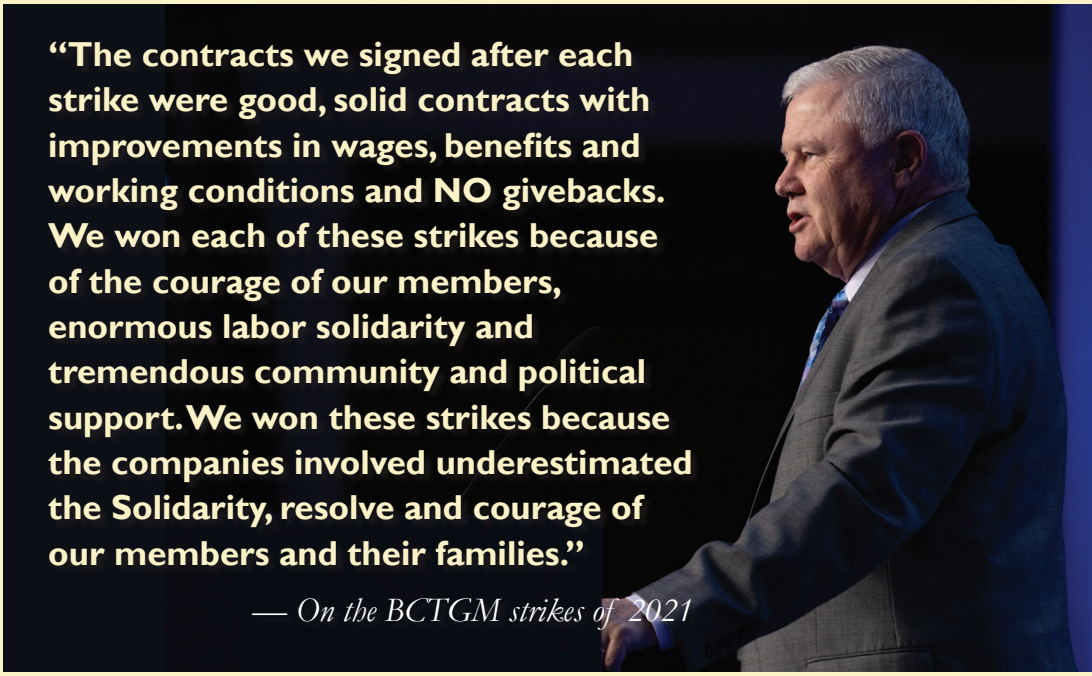
"I have always said that stewards are the most important part of our Union. The stewards are the first line of defense for our members. They are the face of the Union. They are the foundation that keeps this great Union strong! I take great pride in my time as a steward. I learned a lot from those stewards who came before me and always did my best to represent the members in my bakery."

— On the importance of BCTGM Shop Stewards



"The contracts we signed after each strike were good, solid contracts with improvements in wages, benefits and working conditions and NO givebacks. We won each of these strikes because of the courage of our members, enormous labor solidarity and tremendous community and political support. We won these strikes because the companies involved underestimated the Solidarity, resolve and courage of our members and their families."

— On the BCTGM strikes of 2021

"The BCTGM International will continue to place membership education as one of its highest priorities. We will keep fighting for paid shop steward training in our contracts. We will expand our training options whenever we can. We will work with local unions that want organizing and strike trainings. And we will continue to improve and expand our New Officers Training Program."

— On the importance of BCTGM continuing education programs

"This International is here to help you do anything you need to strengthen your local union. This International is here for you and you'll be seeing a lot of us at your local unions and in your plants. We want to know what issues our members are dealing with and how we can help. We've hired a lot more staff to help you out with servicing, organizing and bargaining. We are building for the future. And each and every one of you is going to play a part in that!"

— On the International's commitment to servicing BCTGM Local Unions

Delegates Re-Elect Shelton, Woods to Lead the BCTGM

On Friday, July 29, delegates unanimously re-elected Anthony Shelton as International President and David Woods as International Secretary-Treasurer.

Following the Convention Call to Order by International President Shelton, the Committee on Committees presented the final report on credentials. The Convention was attended by 196 local union delegates, representing 80 local unions and 35 International Union delegates. The final combined International delegate and local union delegate vote count was 2,025.

For the election of the International President, Shelton called upon retired International President Frank Hurt as the temporary chair of the Convention.

"It is a personal privilege and a distinct honor for me to be here to participate in this Convention. In accordance with Article IV, Section 3 of the Constitution of this International Union, entitled 'Nominations', I hereby declare nominations for the office of President in order," Hurt stated.

Local 25 (Chattanooga, Tenn.) Financial Secretary/Business Agent and General Executive Board member Jeff Webb nominated Anthony Shelton for International President.

Delegates unanimously elected Shelton as International President, followed by a standing ovation.

"Thank you everyone for electing me to this position. I have lived with this Union my whole life and I am so proud to lead. It has been a great honor. Your confidence in my leadership is very humbling and I thank you," President Shelton said as he thanked the delegates for re-electing him.

Local 149 President and General Executive Board member Letitia Malone nominated David Woods for the office of International Secretary-Treasurer. Delegates unanimously elected Woods and gave him a rousing standing ovation.

"I love this job just as I love everything about this Union. I have loved this Union since the day I became a steward in the plant. I promise you I will work as hard for you as I have ever worked in my career. I will always fight for your dignity and justice. I am so humbled and thank you for putting your trust in me. I promise to always do the best that I can," concluded Secretary-Treasurer Woods.

International Vice Presidents Re-Elected

The delegates to the BCTGM 41st Constitutional Convention unanimously elected five Regional International Vice Presidents to lead the BCTGM's regions for the ensuing four years.

Canadian Region: Ron Piercey

Southern Region: Zach Townsend

East-Central Region: Roger Miller

Western Region: Shad Clark

Midwest Region: Brad Schmidt

International General Executive Board Re-Elected

Delegates to the 41st Constitutional Convention elected the following BCTGM Local Union Officers to serve a four-year term on the BCTGM International General Executive Board.

East-Central Region

Joyce Alston, President, Local 53

Paul LaBuda, President, Local 19

Gary Oskoian, Fin. Secy./Bus. Agt, Local 68

Midwest Region

Wally Borgan, President, Local 22

Donald Woods, President, Local 1

Southern Region

Letitia Malone, Pres./Bus. Agt., Local 149

Jeff Webb, Fin. Secy./Bus. Agt., Local 25

Western Region

Cameron Taylor, Business Agent, Local 364

Doyle Townson, Financial Secretary, Local 31

Canadian Region

Earl Lublow, Financial Secretary Treasurer, Local 468

Pierre Luc Doucet, President, Local 261T

Tobacco Sector

Aaron Graves, President, Local 176T

Keith Morris, Sr., President, Local 203T

Woods Introduces Tributes to Historic Strikes of 2021

Throughout 2021, BCTGM members from coast to coast were inspired and energized by the bravery of union members who made the ultimate choice to stand up and fight back against unfair employer demands. From Frito Lay and Nabisco, to Kellogg's and Jon Donaire, BCTGM members hit the streets and fought hard to improve their own working conditions, and as a result, have helped improve the rights of future generations.

"Strikes take an enormous toll on workers, their families and their communities; but I can say with certainty that our members who walked those lines and who stood toe-to-toe with the biggest names in our industries would not have it any other way. Our members have been an inspiration to the entire labor movement," said Secretary-Treasurer David Woods, who led a daily recap of the 2021 strikes throughout the Convention.

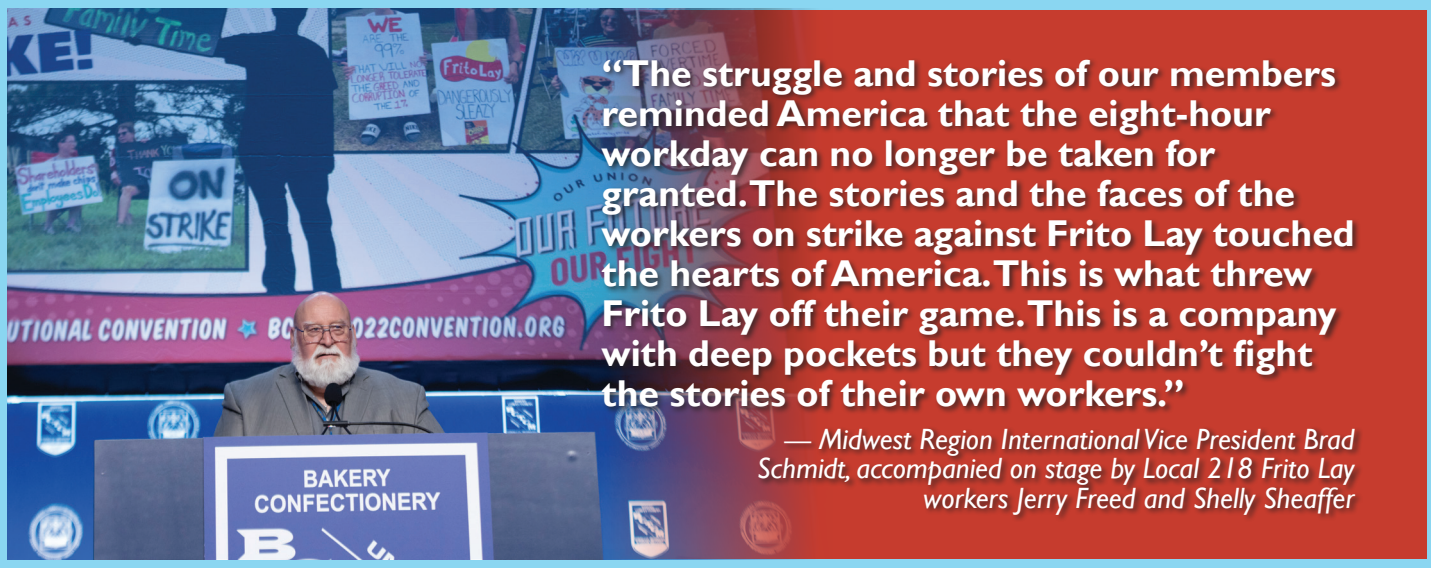
"These strikes changed the lives of our BCTGM brothers and sisters. These strikes changed our BCTGM International Union and the entire labor movement," said Woods.

"The International Union was fully engaged in each strike, at every level. From the negotiating table, the news media and social networks, to planning rallies and events, and boots on the ground at every picket line, the full force of this International Union was activated," he proclaimed.

"Employers across North America know that when you take on one of us, you take on all of us. In negotiations from coast to coast, employers are eager to settle contracts without a fight with the BCTGM," Woods said.

"Make no mistake about it. The steadfast commitment of Jon Donaire workers on strike made this struggle a local and national cause. These Latinas are the true labor heroes of the day. Everyone else helped move the struggle forward. It was indeed a labor-community collaboration showing true worker power."

— BCTGM International Representative Karrie Setters, Jon Donaire strike



"The struggle and stories of our members reminded America that the eight-hour workday can no longer be taken for granted. The stories and the faces of the workers on strike against Frito Lay touched the hearts of America. This is what threw Frito Lay off their game. This is a company with deep pockets but they couldn't fight the stories of their own workers."

— Midwest Region International Vice President Brad Schmidt, accompanied on stage by Local 218 Frito Lay workers Jerry Freed and Shelly Sheaffer

"It was a long, hard and emotional fight against a global giant but in the end we WON! And we won in every sense of the word. We won the respect of our fellow union members, respect in our communities, respect from our political leaders and the respect of other unions."

— Darlene Carpenter, Local 358 Richmond, Va., Nabisco strike

"We understood that we were fighting not just for Nabisco workers - but we were fighting for every worker who believes in better treatment on the job and more rights in the workplace."

— Veronica Hopkins, Local 1 Chicago, Ill., Nabisco strike

"Our fight for fairness penetrated into our communities. It captured the attention of elected officials, community leaders, and countless union members and leaders throughout the Lancaster area who stopped by to give their support."

— Keith White, Local 374G Lancaster, Pa., Kellogg's strike

"For seventy-seven days we held the line, we fought hard and remained united defining what it means to be a union family. Dedicated to a purpose. Driven by principle. United by our courage and conviction."

— Rob Eafen, Local 252G Memphis, Tenn., Kellogg's strike

Importance of BCTGM Organizing for the Future

In his address to the Convention, BCTGM Director of Organization John Price stressed the importance of organizing non-union workers to increase our union density and give the Union more power at the bargaining table.

"Over the past 146 years, the BCTGM has evolved with changing industries and employers, fluctuating labor laws and shifting demographics. And through it all, we have expanded our membership, grown our union density, and given non-union workers a voice at work. It is that tradition of organizing that we continue here today.

"It is our duty as leaders, officers, stewards, members and activists of the BCTGM to be actively involved in organizing so that this union will be around for another 150 years," said Price.

At the conclusion of his speech, Price asked delegates to rise and take an organizing pledge.

"I hereby promise to make Organizing one of my top priorities.

As a local Union Leader, I pledge to start at least one organizing campaign each and every year between now and the next convention.

I promise to do what I can to make my community aware of our local union and the benefits of belonging to the BCTGM.

Lastly, I pledge to Organize because it's Our Union, Our Future and Our Fight!"

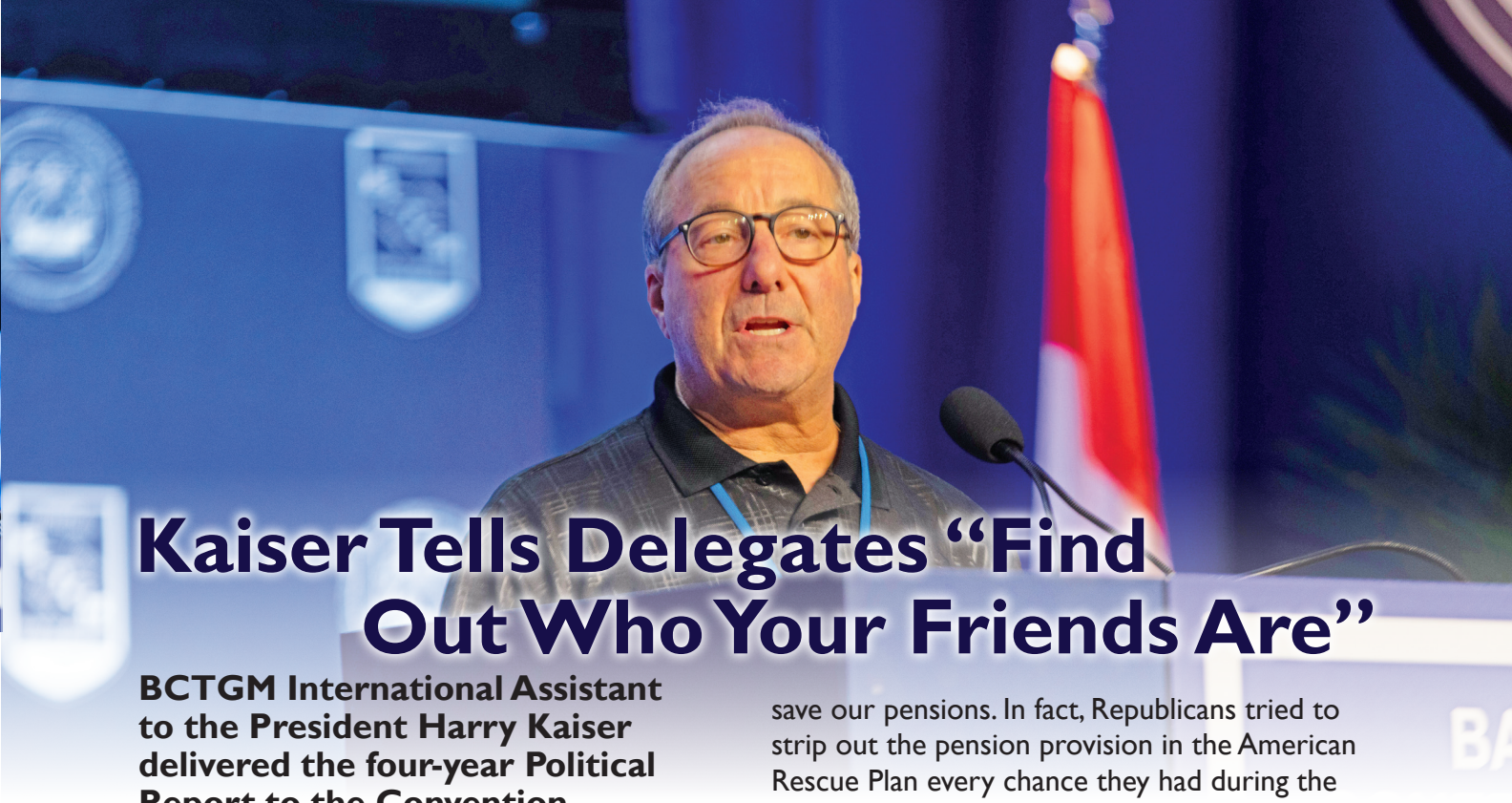
- 2022 Organizing Pledge excerpt

Celebrating Blues City Organizing Win

Local 149 President and General Executive Board member Letitia Malone introduced a video about the long and hard-fought organizing effort to win union representation for hundreds of workers at Blues City Brewery in Memphis, Tenn. Accompanying Malone to the stage for her address were International Representatives and Organizers Jason Thomas, Derrick Byrd, Darrell Copeland and Nate Zeff, all of whom assisted Malone throughout the organizing drive and fight for a first contract.

"We won because we all believed we would. Workers now have a voice at work which they never had before and this agreement has helped make Blues City Brewery a better and safer place to work," Malone told delegates.

"And while the company wouldn't allow me to set foot on the property at any time during the campaign or negotiations, this is my key to the union office we have set up inside the plant where workers have easy access to the union at any time," Malone proudly said.



Kaiser Tells Delegates "Find Out Who Your Friends Are"

BCTGM International Assistant to the President Harry Kaiser delivered the four-year Political Report to the Convention, reminding delegates to stay loyal only to the politicians who support the BCTGM.

"Over the last four years, as the BCTGM and our members faced some of the toughest challenges in our proud history, we found out who our friends are in the political world. We found out who would be there for us when we needed them the most and who turned their backs on us and went the other way," Kaiser said.

"Brothers and Sisters, not one Republican in Congress voted for the American Rescue Plan to save our pensions. In fact, Republicans tried to strip out the pension provision in the American Rescue Plan every chance they had during the legislative process," he told delegates.

"During the 2020 presidential campaign, Joe Biden said he would be the most pro-Union president in history. And he has backed up his words with actions. He was there for us in the fight to save our pensions. He was there for us when our members were on strike," Kaiser reminded delegates.

"The BCTGM will give it everything we have in November to elect to Congress true friends of the BCTGM and defeat those who would do harm to this Union and our members," he concluded.

2022 BCTGM-PAC Awards (2018-2021)

10: Local 1 (Chicago, Ill.)

9: Local 260G (Caro, Mich.)

8: Local 369G (Renville, Minn.)

7: Local 719 (Fairlawn, N.J.)

6: Local 31 (Long Beach, Calif.)

5: Local 36G (Buffalo, N.Y.)

4: Local 325G (Gibson City, Ill.)

3: Local 342 (Bloomington, Ill.)

2: Local 100G (Cedar Rapids, Iowa)

First Place: Local 13G (Hastings, Minn.)

BCTGM Delegates Set Agen

The 41st Constitutional Convention of the BCTGM was called to order on Wednesday, July 27 and concluded on Tuesday, August 2.

The theme of the BCTGM's 2022 Convention was *"Our Union Our Future Our Fight"*.

Delegates heard from a number of impressive speakers from throughout the labor movement including AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler, AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond, IUF General Secretary Sue Longley, American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten, North Carolina AFL-CIO President MaryBe McMillan, Oregon AFL-CIO President Graham Trainor and Virginia AFL-CIO President Doris Crouse-Mays.

DA FOR THE NEXT FOUR YEARS

BCTGM delegates elected International Union Officers to lead the BCTGM for the next four years, approved Constitutional amendments and Resolutions shaping the Union's future and attended numerous special events.

The 2022 Convention included a number of Local Union delegates and activists who helped introduce special video features from the Convention stage. Those features included videos and comments on all of the 2021 strikes, the COVID-19 pandemic, a social media panel, the Blues City Organizing victory and more.

Convention videos, guest speakers and special features and more can be relived on **BCTGM2022Convention.org.**

Prior to adjourning the Convention on the fifth and final day, International President Anthony Shelton asked delegates to help send a message of support to members of Local 100G in Cedar Rapids, Iowa, who went on strike at Ingredion on August 1. Delegates stood for a video greeting to send to their union Brothers and Sisters on the picket line. With fists raised in the air, Convention delegates loudly proclaimed, "SOLIDARITY!"

2022 BCTGM CONVENTION COMMITTEES

Delegates attending the 41st Constitutional Convention, the union's highest decision-making body, helped plan the BCTGM's next four years.

Each of the 80 Local Unions represented at the Convention, as well as the International General Executive Board, was given an opportunity to submit resolutions to the Convention for consideration.

Throughout the course of the Convention, delegates considered 27 resolutions. Prior to the Convention, the Committee on Committees assigned each resolution to a specific Convention Committee. In addition to the Committee on Committees, other Convention Committees included: Constitution, Finance, Organizing, Political Action, and Resolutions. The Committees are made up of local union delegates and advised by an International Vice President.

COMMITTEE ON COMMITTEES

Committee meetings were held throughout the course of the week while the Convention was in recess. During these working sessions, each resolution was thoroughly discussed

CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE

and debated. Once each group reached a consensus on its assigned resolutions, a report was submitted to the Convention body, with a recommendation for action.

Delegates were then given the opportunity to debate the committee recommendation and vote for or against the adoption of each resolution. In addition to setting the agenda for the next four years, this procedure provides the membership with a voice in the policy-making process of the International Union.

The resolutions presented to the delegates covered such topics as retirement security, organizing, political action, education, preserving jobs, health & safety, collective bargaining, and community partnerships. In addition, there were 13 resolutions amending the BCTGM International Union Constitution. Resolutions passed by the Convention can be reviewed at **bctgm2022convention.org.**

RESOLUTIONS COMMITTEE

POLITICAL ACTION COMMITTEE

FINANCE COMMITTEE

ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

"Thank You for Saving Our Pensions!"

In a special Convention feature, President Shelton paid tribute to the work of BCTGM members who pushed hard to get Congress to pass the American Rescue Plan Act.

BCTGM Local 68 Vice President/Assistant Business Agent Rodney Lightfoot was called to the stage to give a personal account on the importance of his pension before introducing a video featuring BCTGM members and retirees thanking President Biden for saving their pensions.

"Like all of you here, I worked hard, day in and day out, in the plant always looking forward to the day when I would be able to retire and live on the pension I had spent many years working toward. Just the idea that it would not be there for me is terrifying.

"When the International Union asked us to help in this fight – there was nothing I wouldn't do to save my pension. I understood that we needed Congress to take action and help us.

"President Biden came into office committed to protecting our retirement benefits. And last year, with a stroke of his pen, President Joe Biden wiped away the very real threat and SAVED OUR PENSIONS! I don't know about you, but I will be forever grateful to a President who puts hardworking Americans like us as a priority," concluded Lightfoot.

Ray Scannell Education Award

The BCTGM continues to prioritize the continued education of its members and leaders. Following the Education Report to the Convention, International President Anthony Shelton led a special tribute to former International Director of Research and Education Ray Scannell who passed away in 2021.

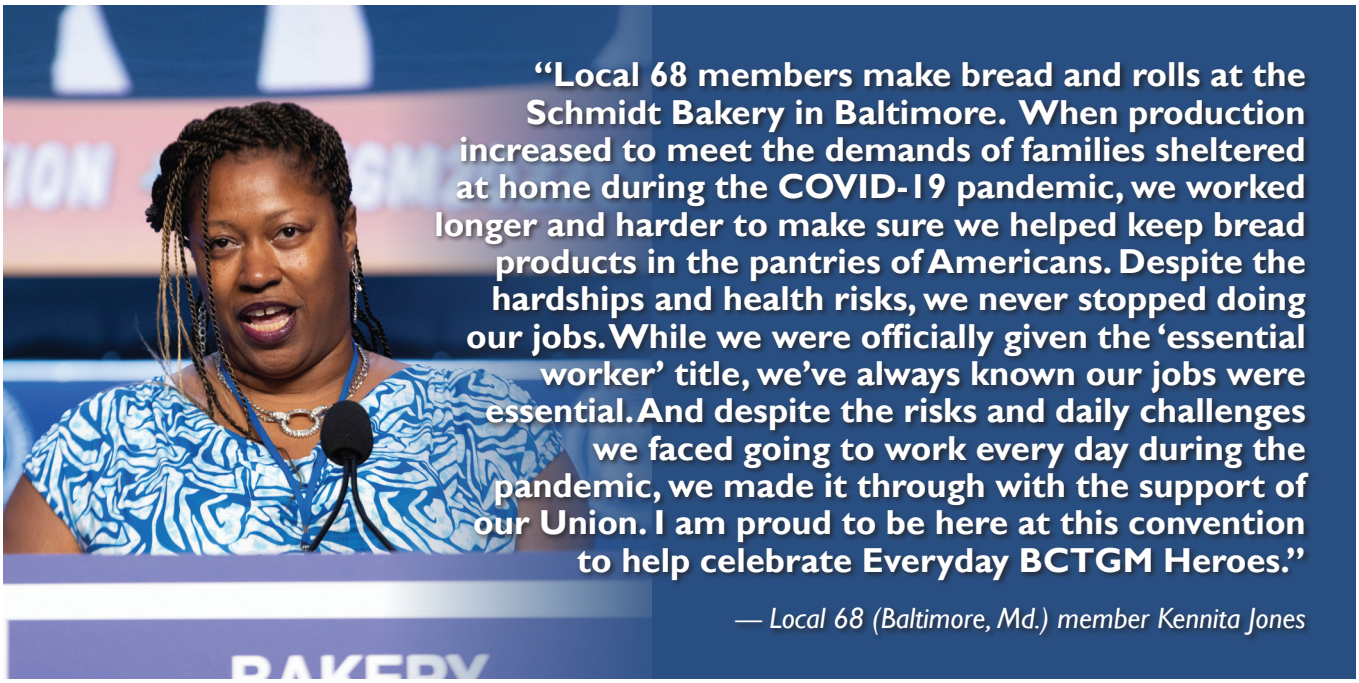
President Shelton announced Local 167G of Grand Forks, North Dakota as the winner of the first Ray Scannell Excellence in Education Award to be awarded at each Convention. Local 167G President John Riskey and Financial Secretary Renae Frederickson were presented with the education award by Ray's family.

"Local 167G embodies everything this award is about. Both of its local union officers, President John Riskey and Financial Secretary Renae Frederickson have been through the New Officers Training Program. The Local hosts regular steward trainings, as well as internal organizing trainings. When the International has held multi-union organizing trainings, Local 167G has participated. In addition, the Local always seems to have children of members apply for the BCTGM scholarship, which means they do a good job of promoting the scholarship program," proclaimed President Shelton.

BCTGM Everyday Working Heroes

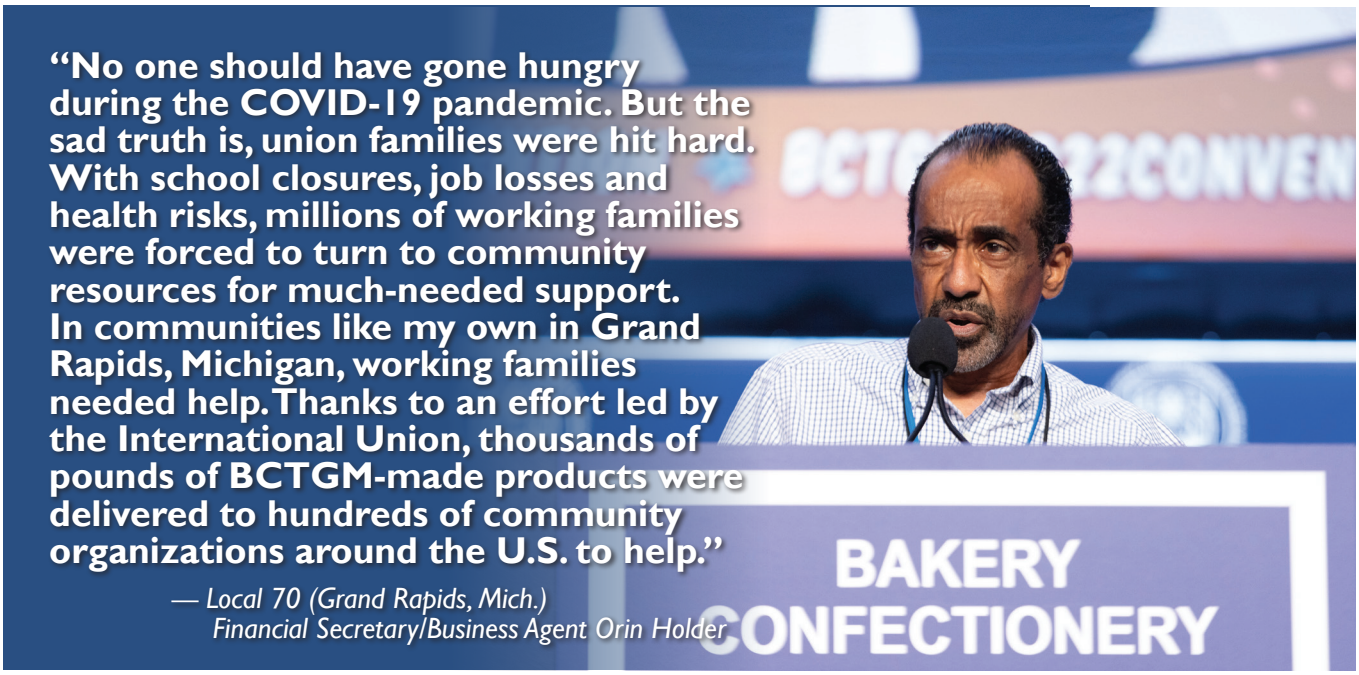
International President Anthony Shelton led a special tribute to BCTGM members who worked throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. "Over the last two and a half years, I have never been so proud of representing the hard-working members of the BCTGM. Under unbelievably difficult circumstances, you all courageously continued the production and delivery of essential goods to a nation in need, and you continue to do so day in and day out. You exemplify the best of our nation and you are truly the backbone of this country.

"I'd like to shine a spotlight on some of our everyday BCTGM heroes – many of whom are in this Convention Hall today – who stepped up to keep food in our homes and on our grocery store shelves throughout the pandemic," said Shelton.



"Local 68 members make bread and rolls at the Schmidt Bakery in Baltimore. When production increased to meet the demands of families sheltered at home during the COVID-19 pandemic, we worked longer and harder to make sure we helped keep bread products in the pantries of Americans. Despite the hardships and health risks, we never stopped doing our jobs. While we were officially given the 'essential worker' title, we've always known our jobs were essential. And despite the risks and daily challenges we faced going to work every day during the pandemic, we made it through with the support of our Union. I am proud to be here at this convention to help celebrate Everyday BCTGM Heroes."

— Local 68 (Baltimore, Md.) member Kennita Jones



"No one should have gone hungry during the COVID-19 pandemic. But the sad truth is, union families were hit hard. With school closures, job losses and health risks, millions of working families were forced to turn to community resources for much-needed support. In communities like my own in Grand Rapids, Michigan, working families needed help. Thanks to an effort led by the International Union, thousands of pounds of BCTGM-made products were delivered to hundreds of community organizations around the U.S. to help."

— Local 70 (Grand Rapids, Mich.) Financial Secretary/Business Agent Orin Holder

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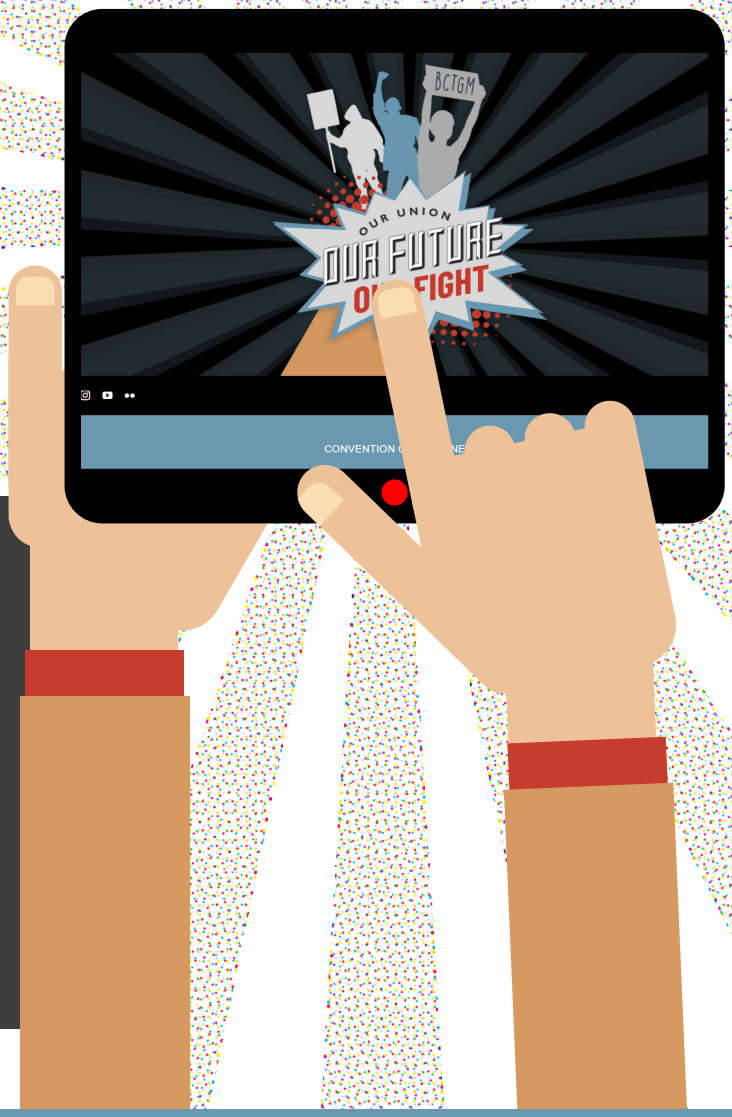
2022 Convention RECAP Online!

Recap all of the action from the 2022 BCTGM Convention online! All speeches, delegate action and special Convention videos are now availabe online to watch and share.

Whether you were at the Convention or not, check out the most memorable moments at **www.bctgm2022convention.org!**



- ✓ VIDEOS OF SPEAKERS
- ✓ DAILY BLOG SUMMARIES
- ✓ PHOTOS
- ✓ BCTGM WORKER VIDEOS
- ✓ RESOLUTIONS PASSED

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